



Catherine E. Pugh
Mayor

COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

Tom Liebel, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Chris Ryer
Director

February 12, 2019

REQUEST: Construct Ten New Three-Story Rowhouses

ADDRESSES: 1216-1226 Hollins Street and 14-20 S. Stockton Street (Union Square Historic District)

PETITIONER(S): Jim Mills, BWI RE Properties

STAFF: Walter W. Gallas, AICP

RECOMMENDATION: Concept approval of height, scale, and massing, with plans to return to Commission for final approval of design details

SITE/HISTORIC DISTRICT

Union Square Historic District: The Union Square local historic district is a dense area of rowhouses and commercial structures located in Southwest Baltimore. Two major features define the district: Union Square Park, a donation to the city in the 1840s, and Hollins Market with the city's oldest market building. Generally bounded by S. Schroeder Street, W. Pratt Street, S. Fulton Avenue, and W. Baltimore Street, the area of approximately 21 blocks is comprised of over 1,000 buildings. The district is built on a hierarchical street-grid system laid down over gently sloping terrain by engineer-surveyor Thomas H. Poppleton following the land's 1816 annexation to the city (*Image 1*).

Site Conditions – 1216 -1226 Hollins Street

The existing property is vacant land in the center of the historic district on the north side of Hollins Street between S. Stockton Street to the east and S. Carey Street to the west (*Image 2*).

Site Conditions – 14-20 S. Stockton Street

These addresses are also vacant lots on the block of Stockton Street between W. Baltimore Street to the north and Hollins Street to the south. The land to the south is vacant due to the Hollins Street demolitions. The site is bounded on the north by The Greater Church of Jesus Christ (*Image 2*).

BACKGROUND

1216 -1226 Hollins Street

The land was formerly occupied by seven rowhouses (*Image 3*). By 1992, five of them remained. In November 2017, the Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation concurred that due to fire and deterioration, the buildings had lost substantial architectural fabric and significance and were no longer contributing buildings (*Image 4*). The buildings

were demolished beginning in early 2018, after another fire (*Image 5*). The westernmost building still standing on the site, 1226 Hollins Street, is slated for demolition once legal issues are worked out in tax court, according to the applicant.*

14-20 S. Stockton Street

This property has been empty of buildings since some time in 1979, when a row of six three-story rowhouses was demolished to create a parking lot. According to the 1975 *Poppleton Historic Study*, the buildings were built post-Civil War, between 1865 and 1880 (*Image 6*). The demolition was requested by the building owner. It was supported by the Ekstrom-Colimore, Doyle, Inc. study of the West Baltimore commercial area which argued for the need for inner block parking areas to meet future demand. The demolition was also supported by the Poppleton PAC provided the owner work with the group to relocate the building's residents. The demolition was approved by CHAP on May 12, 1978, subject to the relocation of the tenants prior to the demolition. On January 18, 1980, CHAP approved landscaping and fencing for the parking lot, which at that point was owned by Maryland National Bank.

PROPOSAL

Applicant proposes to construct six new three-story rowhouses on the lots at 1216-1226 Hollins Street, and four new three-story rowhouses on the lots at 14-20 S. Stockton Street (*Images 7-10*).

APPLICATION OF GUIDELINES

- *2.1 Guiding Principles for New Construction:* The new construction, in accordance with the guidelines, is replacing buildings which were approved for demolition. The buildings which stood on Hollins Street had substantially lost their architectural fabric and significance, and their demolition was approved by the Commission in 2017. The buildings on S. Stockton Street were approved for demolition by the Commission in 1978 to make way for a bank parking lot. The proposed design for the replacement structures is contemporary, which is consistent with the guidelines, while taking into account the surrounding character of the historic district in terms of massing and scale. Note: The applicant will provide a perspective rendering of the buildings on the street.
- *2.2 Site Design:* The plans meet this design guideline, constructing the houses to the front property lines with no setbacks, as is the pattern in the neighborhood.
- *2.3 Scale and Form:* The height and depth of the buildings are compatible with the height and depth of other buildings in the neighborhood overall. Four of the new houses on Hollins Street will be on lots that are 17.25 feet wide, replacing five lots that were 13 to 15 feet wide. The proposed new rowhouses are 33'-0⁵/₈" in height with flat roofs. The heights of the rowhouses across Hollins Street to the south of the proposed construction are comparable, measuring from about 29'-0" to 32'-0" based on aerial views. The front elevations on the proposed Hollins Street houses could use further study to achieve a more effective pattern of window openings. The four proposed three-story Stockton Street houses will be each be on 16 foot wide lots replacing the six three-story rowhouses that were only 11 feet wide. The front elevation design of the four houses retains a simple window and door pattern. In contrast to the Hollins Street

* For further background information on 1216 – 1226 Hollins Street, see CHAP staff report, November 14, 2017.

houses, however, the front doors are recessed several feet in order to avoid impinging on the sidewalk right-of-way for fire marshal purposes.

- *2.4.1 Building Entrances:* The front entrances of the proposed Hollins Street houses with stoops are effective connectors to the street, and meet the design guidelines, but the recessed entrances of the S. Stockton Street houses could use some more study.
- *2.4.3 Garages:* Four of the proposed Hollins Street houses will have garages at the first floor accessed from a private drive off of S. Stockton Street. Located as they are at the rear, the garages meet the design guidelines.
- *2.4.5 Roofs:* The proposed roofs are flat, which are compatible with the designs of surrounding buildings. The initial designs show no roof cornice detail, which needs to be addressed. The plans partially meet the design guidelines.
- *2.5.1 Doors and Windows:* The proposed windows are one-over-one windows for the most part. The initial designs for the Hollins Street houses show a square window on the second floor elevation, where a half bath is located in a corner of the dining room. The window breaks up the rhythm at the front. Doors at the second floor of the Hollins Street houses lead to very shallow balconies suspended over the first floor windows. The balconies don't seem to be very functional given their size. This part of the design should be rethought.
- *2.5.2 Materials:* The initial plans indicate that proposed materials include a brick veneer with cast accents, some Hardie Panel accents, wood windows, and a pre-case coping cap at the roof. Materials are not finalized, but staff anticipates that the materials will meet the design guidelines.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS

The Union Square ARC and Hollins Roundhouse Neighborhood Association have received copies of the plans and have expressed no objections.

ANALYSIS

CHAP staff finds that the proposed new construction:

- Meets *2.1 Guiding Principles for New Construction;*
- Meets *2.2 Site Design;*
- Substantially meets *2.3 Scale and form;*
- Partially meets *2.4.1 Building Entrances;*
- Meets *2.4.3 Garages;*
- Substantially meets *2.4.5 Roofs;*
- Substantially meets *2.5.1 Doors and Windows;* and
- Meets *2.5.2 Material.*

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends concept approval of height, scale, and massing, with plans to return to the Commission for final approval of design details. Staff recommends that the architect develop more fully:

--The design of the Hollins Street elevations, specifically studying the square windows and balconies at the second floors, articulating the roof cornice more fully, looking at the finishes for the end unit elevations (stucco versus Hardie panel), and proposing colors for masonry and Hardie panels.

--The design of the S. Stockton Street elevations, specifically the depth of the recessed entries, articulating the roof cornice more fully, looking at the finishes for the end unit elevations (stucco versus Hardie panel), and proposing colors for masonry and Hardie panels

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. S. Holcomb".

Eric Holcomb
Director

MAP AND IMAGES

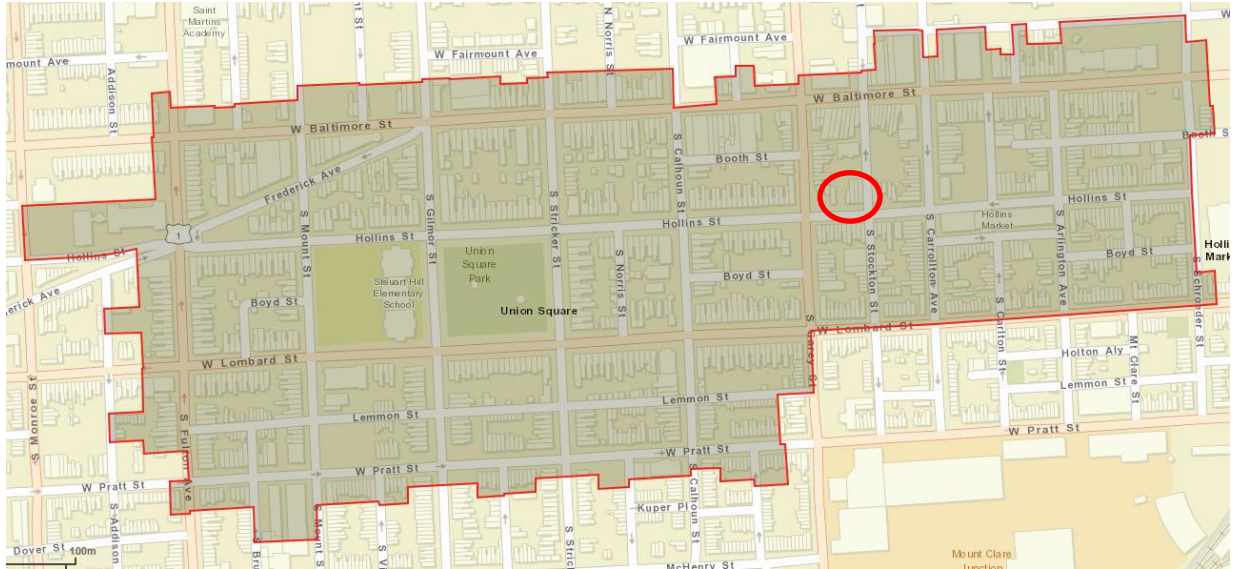


Image 1– 1216-1226 Hollins and 14-20 S. Stockton Street in the Union Square Historic District



Image 2: 1216-1226 Hollins Street and 14-20 S. Stockton Street, construction site, December 8, 2018



Image 3: 1214 – 1226 Hollins Street, December 30, 1977

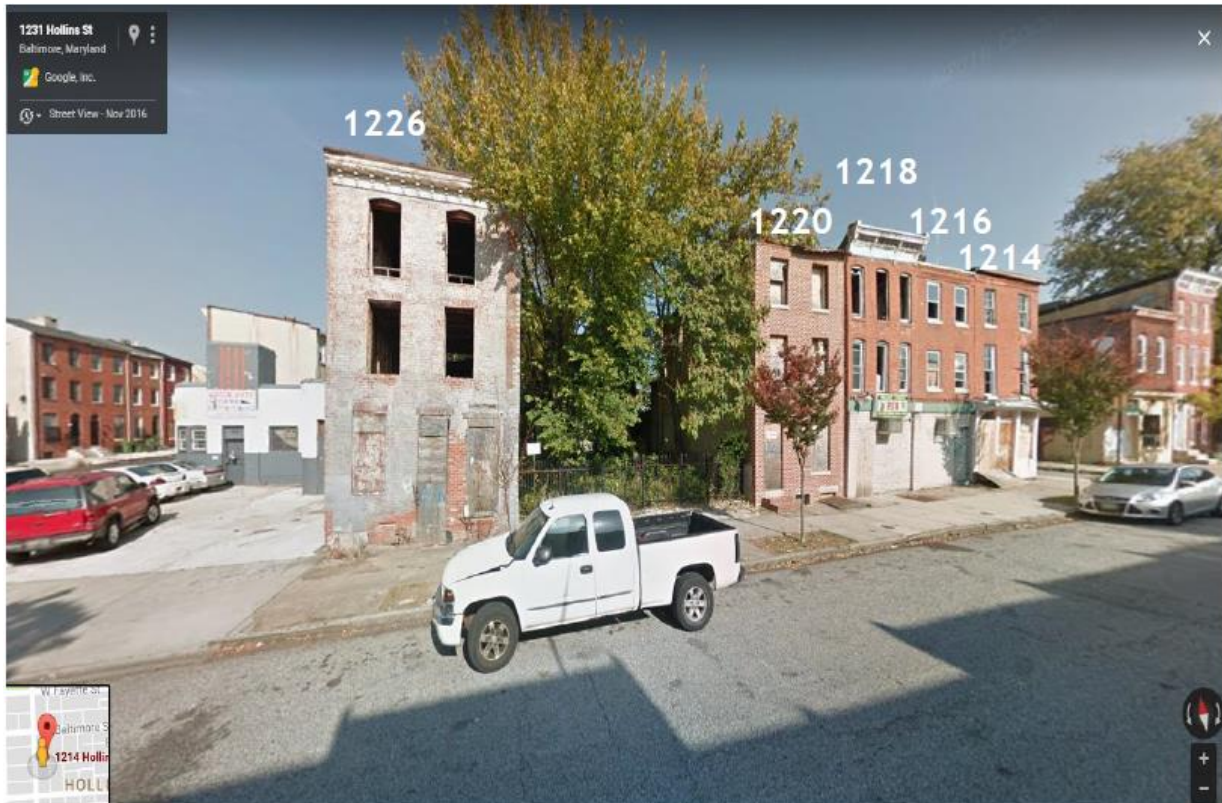


Image 4: 1214 to 1226 Hollins Street, Google Street View, November 2016

1216-1226 Hollins Street and 14-20 S. Stockton Street (Union Square Historic District)– Construct Ten New Rowhouses



Image 5: Demolition of 1214-1224 Hollins Street, 2018



Image 6: 14-24 S. Stockton Street, December 30, 1978, CHAP files

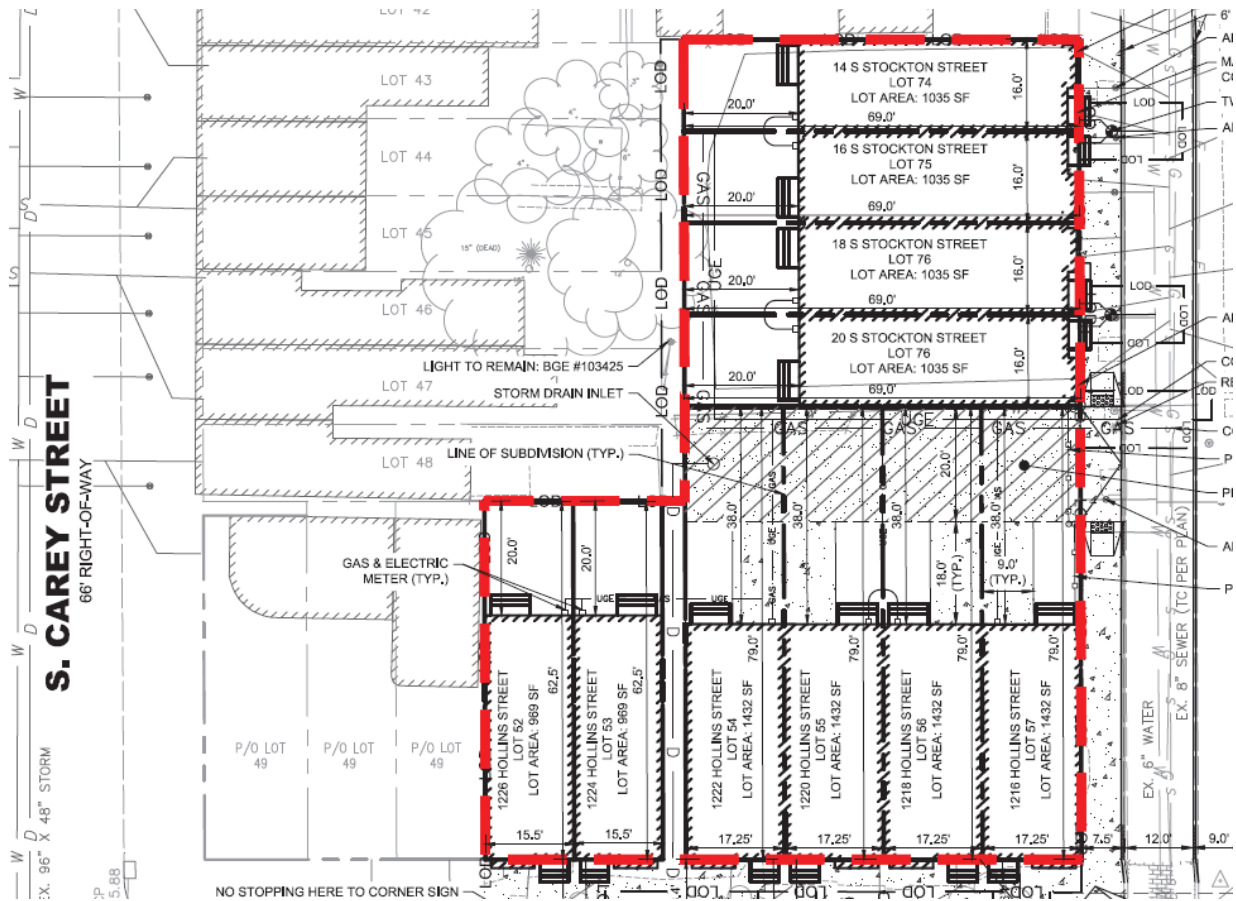
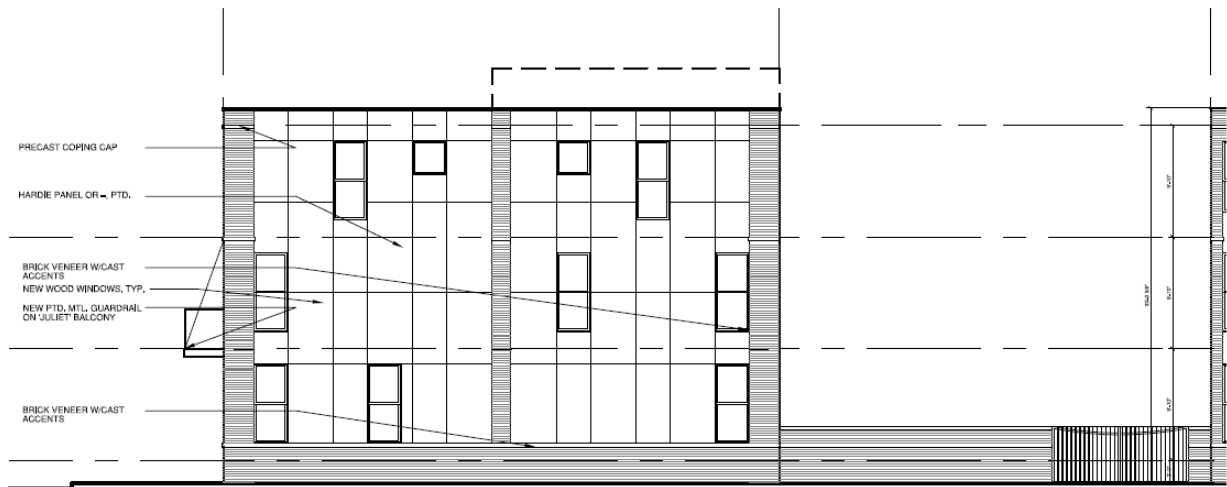


Image 7: 1216-1226 Hollins Street and 14-20 S. Stockton Street, Site Plan detail



Image 8: 1216-1226 Hollins Street elevations, January 17, 2019



STOCKTON STREET ELEVATIONS

Image 9: Stockton Street (east) elevation of 1216 Hollins Street end unit, January 17, 2019



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A4

STOCKTON STREET ELEVATIONS

1/8" = 1'-0"

Image 10: 14-20 S. Stockton Street elevations, January 17, 2019